THINGS
Plain and Weighty

REFERRED

Unto the Conſideration of both Houſes of Parliament, aſſembled at *Weſtminſter*, *March* 25. 1690.

That Peace and Happineſs, Truth and Juſtice, Religion and Piety may be eſtabliſhed amongſt us for all Generations.

Prov. 28. 2. *For the Tranſgreſſion of a Land, many are the Princes thereof: But by a Man of Underſtanding and Knowledge the State thereof ſhall be prolonged.*

Iſa. 5. 13. *Therefore my People are gone into Captivity, becauſe they have no Knowledge, and their honourable Men are famiſhed, and their multitude are dried up with Thirſt.*

Printed in the Year 1690.

THINGS

Things Plain and Weighty referred unto the Conſideration of both Houſes of Parliament, &c.

IT is a ſlanderous Report of the Goſpel, *That ſome affirm thereof, as if it did allow to do evil, that good may come*, Rom. 3. 8. God revealed himſelf otherwiſe of Old, *He is the Rock, his Work is perfect: for all his Ways are Judgment, a God of Truth, and without Iniquity, juſt and right is he*, Deut. 32. 4. *Thou art of purer Eyes then to behold Evil, and canſt not look on Iniquity: wherefore lookeſt thou upon them that deal treacherouſly*, Hab. 1. 13. *God that is holy, ſhall be ſanctified in Righteouſneſs*, Iſa. 5. 16. *For I the Lord love Judgment, I hate Robbery for Burnt-Offering, and I will direct their Work in Truth*, Chap. 61. 8. *Will ye ſpeak wickedly for God, and talk deceitfully for him?* Job 13. 7. *For the Word of the Lord is right, and all his Works are done in Truth*, Pſal. 33. 4. *But Judgment ſhall return unto Righteouſneſs, and all the upright in Heart ſhall follow it*, Pſal. 94. 15. *The Works of his Hands are Verity and Judgment; all his Commandments are ſure: They ſtand faſt for ever and ever, and are done in truth and uprightneſs*, Pſal. 111. 7, 8. *The Lord is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works*, Pſal. 145. 17. More Texts might be alledged to manifeſt, that his Glory is not to be advanced by ſinful means: Indeed this cannot be, for it would be contrary to his infinite Purity and Uprightneſs, with whom dwells no ſhadow of Evil.

But experience hath diſcovered, that when ſome have deſigned Rebellion for their own Ambition, Intereſt and Revenge, they muſt have a Fig-leave to hide it from ſimple People, whom they draw on their ſide: And what can be better then *Abſalom's* Vow, Religion and the Glory of God, as hath been the method of former Ages; this hath been made uſe of as a pre- 2 Sam. 15. 8, 11.

tence to further their own damned Enterprizes. Good God! that thy Name should be so abused, by vile Miscreants; That thou, who dost abhor, and hast *revealed thy Wrath against all*
Rom. 1. 18 *Unrighteousness of men*, shouldst be made use of to patronize it; as if thou wert such an one thy self. I am astonished to think of this horrible perverting of thy Ways and Nature! Men would not dare do thus, but *thou holdest thy Tongue*, Hab. 1. 13. Otherwise there could be no Tryal, whether they would do thus or not. But notwithstanding all the practices of wicked Hypocrites (through which Strangers and the Ignorant may misapprehend the God whom we serve,) thou wilt be justified when thou speakest, and clear when thou judgest at the last and great Day: And even now thou art in this, and all other matters as thou speakest in thy Word.

The Author of the New-Testament observed by his own Example, what he taught and commanded to others; When he was betrayed into the Hands of Wicked Men, though he could have had more then twelve Legions of Angels, yet made not the least opposition. He was the Son of God, King of Kings and Lord of Lords, and consequently exempt from paying of Tribute to them; yet rather then he would *give offence*, he
Mat. 17. wrought a Miracle for the payment thereof. And hath left this standing Commandment to all his Followers, *Render unto Cæsar the Things which are Cæsars*, Mat. 22. 21. Now the principal thing belonging to him is Subjection and Ligeance, as it is more particularly explained, *Rom.* 13. *Ye must needs be subject not only for Wrath, but for Conscience sake. Render therefore to all their dues, Tribute to whom Tribute is due, Custom to whom Custom, Fear to whom Fear, Honour to whom Honour.* These things are as much due to the supreme Magistrate, as is the common duty of a Child to a *Parent*. He hath right to them from his Subjects, as they have to their Goods, Estate or Honour. The Doctrine of Loyalty and Obedience to Governours is laid down in as plain terms, as any other duty in the Gospel; and are sufficient to convince him who acts in Sincerity and Truth.

But those which are *presumptuous, self-willed*, 2 *Pet.* 2. 10. of turbulent and factious Spirits, have found out some little and trifling Evasions against these express Texts. There is a way

way in the World of putting Interpretations, when there is no more need of them, then of the most plain obvious expressions: But this is a trick either to wrest, or make the Commandments of God of none effect. The wicked thus vindicate or palliate their Transgression, and others in alike manner justifie Rebellion. Let all men in general remember and take heed, that the great Law-giver, when every one comes to give account before him, will not be trifled with. Such Ways and Devices will not now pass in humane Courts and Judicatories. They have so much the more to answer for by prevaricating the way of the Most High; making his Word as it were a Nose of Wax (some have blasphemously called it so) to stamp any Impression, and mould it to any shape, as serves their base sinister turns. In the end such Men will find, that the All-wise God will not be out-witted by them. The Criminals are not to make their own construction of the Laws against which they have offended, but must receive according to his righteous Judgment; and then *the Wrath of God* which is now *revealed from Heaven against all Unrighteousness of Men, who hold the Truth in Unrighteousness*, shall be actually executed upon them: And likewise will be rendred unto *them that are contentious, and do not obey the Truth, but obey Unrighteousness, Indignation and Wrath.* So they will really wish they had obeyed it, but it is then too late, when the time of Tryal is over. This is as certain and true, as that the Scripture will be fulfilled.

Rom. 1. 18.

Rom. 2. 8.

Thus some do acknowledge Men ought to pay Obedience unto Governours; but then they say, these Commands extend only to those Kings who love Christ, and themselves live obedient to his Law. And whether they do or not, private Persons are made Judges; and if they think such an one doth not, Subjects may lawfully disobey and rebel against him. If this should be granted, no King (howsoever good and righteous) would be safe in his Person; for so apt are men in judging the worst, especially of those above them, that they would censure him to be a prophane Person or Hypocrite. If he was another *David*, a man after God's own Heart (even he was hated and spoken against) he would not be after their liking. Then they would not have this Man reign over them; they

will outwardly conclude him to be an Enemy to Jesus, and pronounce it as lawful to destroy him as Bears and Wolves. Whether he is so or not, an uncharitable Opinion or false Accusation is sufficient ground with them to kill the Lords Anointed, against whom none could lift up his hand and be guiltless. This hath been the Divinity of some, and mischievous in its effects; but let it be examined by that word, which is to try the Doctrines whether they be of Men or no.

Christ delivered that command of Obedience to Magistrates at that very time when an Heathen Emperor was in the Throne, when *Herod* and *Pontius Pilate* were subordinate Governours; when he was Sentenced to Death by unjust judgment, *Peter* would have hindred the execution, but was commanded to put up his Sword in the Sheath. His Apostles Preached the same Doctrine after the Kings of the Earth stood up, and the Rulers were gathered together against the Lord, and against his Christ; which doth manifest that some have interpreted the Gospel contrary to what the first Founders of it intended, and have put that restriction which they never designed. O ye perverters of the meaning of the Holy Ghost, What authority have ye to do these things? By your expositions and glosses, you have diminished from the universal obligation of the commands; Wherefore do you make distinctions, where the Law maketh none? To come to the Old Testament wherein ye so much trust, what do ye think of *Saul* from whom God had rent the Kingdom, and gave it to one better then he? and though *Saul* did seek after his life, yet *David's* faithfulness and duty to him may be seen, 1 *Sam.* 24. 5, 6. 2 *Sam.* 1. There were many wicked Kings in *Israel*, yet to none did the people hence take occasion to rebel, or refuse their lawful injunctions; neither is the least intimation, from Gods Word so to do. It was not because they were *Jews*, and so *the anointed of the Lord*, but even *Cyrus* a Gentile is thus called, *Isa.* 45. 1. And unto * *Nebuchadnezzar God gave the Kingdom*, Dan. 2. 37. So they are indefinitely called *God's Ministers*, Rom. 13. 6. It is not said of that single one, but all in general; The Kings rule several Countrys, but over them all is the Great King of the whole Earth, *the Lord and*

* Who was driven away from his Kingdom, & after he was somewhat abased for his Pride, His Counsellors and his Lords sought unto him, and he was established in his Kingdom; Dan. 4. 36.

Governour of the World. And he having ordained such Relational duties between King and Subjects, Father and Children, Master and Servants, the reason is alike in all, and *we are to be subject to our Kings with all fear, not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward, for this is thank-worthy if a man for Conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully,* 1 Pet. 2. 18, 19. *Thou shalt not speak evil of the Ruler of thy People,* Acts 23. 5. Upon no account, although he doth what he should not. In the original place, *Exod.* 22. 28. It is doubly forbid to lay on greater enforcement. How can Men over-look such plain places, when they are quick enough to spie out any thing that may be wrested to serve their wrong designs? When they meet with such, they have set their brains on work for a plausible interpretation to delude the hearts of the simple. They neglected *to put them in mind to be subject to the Principalities and Powers, to obey Magistrates,* Tit. 3. 1. Whereas if they could bring any thing out of the Old Testament, *of zeal of the Lord of Hosts* and fighting his Battels, this was managed with all their skill and dexterity, to stir up Sedition and Rebellion; but for those against it they did either omit, or fasten their own sence, quite turning that of the Holy Spirit. To apply *Mal.* 2. 7, 8. *The Priests lips should keep knowledge, and they should seek the Law at his Mouth, for he is the Messenger of the Lord of Hosts. But these departed out of the way, they have caused many to stumble at the Gospel by Preaching contrary thereunto, they have corrupted the covenant of Grace, and been partial in the Law*; otherwise they could not turn Religion into Rebellion, for this doth not allow the least Wickedness, so neither that which is the greatest sin, that is commonly committed against Man.

It is against the immediate Ordinance of God, which he doth commonly punish and defeat in this life; One would think, Men might have taken warning by them that *perished as the gain-saying of* Core, how the Earth opened and swallowed them up, as if not fit to live above ground, who would have disturbed that order and government there. Though this was set forth for an Example, *unto all that hereafter should act rebelliously*, yet the Spirit of disobedience hath so wrought in the minds of Men, that they have not refrained from doing Jude 11.

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the same things. Every Age since hath produced instances of those, who have not dyed a death common to Men; It would be endless to Number all the Traytors that have been in our own
Jer.4.15. Nation, I am unwilling to accuse mine own Country-Men, but I am afraid we are a reproach to our Neighbours, that we are a rebellious Country, & Enemies to Kings, as by our Records & Histories it doth appear: But if we consult them, after we find that several have came to a miserable & untimely end; If the business of *Dathan* and *Abirum* was afar of, and long since, these are later and come home. What if in our own Memory some have been destroyed in a rebellious War, others dyed like Dogs, and had their Carcases hanged up for a Spectacle. The Apostle in 1 Cor. 10. mentioneth the punishment which fell upon the Jews, to dehort others from those sins which were the occasion thereof; so that may be here represented according to Truth, which fell upon them, that we may not commit Rebellion as some of them committed, and fell, and became as the dung of the Earth. All these things happened for ensamples, and are written for the admonition of those which come hereafter.

One must be moved with indignation to hear the *Enemies of the Lord Blaspheme*, and *the way of Truth evil spoken of*, to which nothing hath given greater occasion then the carriage of the pretended Religious, especially in two things, Disloyalty to the State and knavery between Man and Man. Then which nothing is more forbidden in Scripture, which, if rightly understood and obeyed, would make the best Men and the best Subjects in the World; he who lives accordingly is an Enemy to none, much less to him whom God hath placed over his people.

But humane Alterations and Constitutions are commonly long before accomplished, and there are in the mean while violent contentions among the people; some crying for this, and another for that, and perhaps none know wherefore. Then the Sword is drawn against our own Country-Men, *One is dashed against another, even the Fathers and the Sons toge-*
Jer.13.14. *ther*, Neighbours and Kinsfolks pursuing one another to death; *for every battle of the Warriour is with confused noise, and garments*
Isa. 9. 5. *rolled in blood.* We may see goodly Personages wallowing in their

their own gore, trodden under foot and no Man to regard them; we may hear the cruel instruments of death bellowing forth wo and destruction, the skreeks and groans of dying Men. *There is a multitude of slain, and a great number of carcases, they stumble upon their corpses*; a real Landskip of misery, occasioned by their own sin and folly. They thought it at first a fine and gainful thing to be disturbers of a quiet state, but such is the event thereof; and it is to be feared further on, for *seditions exclude Men out of the Kingdom of God*, Gal. 5.20, 21 Nahum. 3. 3.

As Health is the greatest good to the Natural Body, so is Peace to the Publick. It is better to have a constant Health, but when interrupted by Sickness, then a proper Remedy is seasonable to restore: So in this world of Sin and Confusion, it is better to prevent the mischievous effects at first; but when they come forth, they must be suppressed again; which may be *closed up & mollified with Oyntment* instead of the *severer Remedies*.

But what if our Rights and Liberties should be invaded, and those in Authority should take too much upon them, as to become Arbitrary, Unjust and Tyrannical?

This is the reasoning of flesh and blood against the Commandments of the Gospel, and in like manner against forgiving Injuries. We are not to go according to the dictates of *Fleshly Wisdom*, or of natural and present preservation to inherit the Kingdom of God; To submit to a light inconvenience for that, is very consistent with true prudence: But this is an Argument from an abuse which may happen, and if that were sufficient to condemn or surcease a thing, we might do so as to all, for nothing is so excellent in its own Nature, but may be corrupted: The best things through the baseness of Humane Nature are most liable to abuse; and it hath been observed that more Rebellions and Disorders happen under a remiss and easy kind of Government, then what is more arbitrary and oppressive; an instance whereof may be in our own Kingdom compared with the Nations round about. But to pursue the argument higher then from the inconvenience and event only; there is not one obligation or duty to God or Man, but a seeming mischief may ensue upon it. He hath been pleased to try our obedience in such kinds of relation, if we do our parts, we

may expect the good and recompence thereof; others are to perform theirs at their own peril or encouragement. Subjects ought not to restrain the exorbitrancy of Kings; for saith the Scripture, *Against a King there is no rising up*, Prov. 30. 31. *Where the Word of a King is, there is Power, and who may say unto him, what dost thou?* Eccles. 8. 4. *Against thee, thee only have I sinned*, Psal. 51. 4. Said *David* in his confession to God for the Murther of *Uriah*, which shews he was accountable to him only for that wicked Action. In the New Testament is a positive command of Christ, *But I say unto you, that ye resist not evil*, which extends to what is done by those who have dominion over us, and an injury offered by a private person. Yet I will not be afraid to speak out, if either should take advantage over Passive Obedience, or the forgiving temper as to domineer or affront the more, it is baseness in the mean while; and it will be determined who acts best, they who go according to the dictates of corrupted Nature, which is Proud and Cruel; or who have it corrected by the *Wisdom from above*, which makes it *pure, peaceable, gentle and easy to be intreated*, Let them be never so great in their own or the Worlds Opinion, they are but Men: And there is one above, *who shall cut off the Spirit of Princes, he is terrible to the Kings of the Earth*, Psal. 76. 12. When they rage most, he can put a hook in their Jaws, and lead them back from their purposes, see *Isa.* 37. 29. *Ezek.* 29. 3. 4. *Dan.* 4. chap. & chap. 11. 36. *Hos.* 7. 16. *Heb.* 11. 27. If it be his good pleasure, he can save his people from their violence, or turn them into the *Rod of his anger*, *Isa.* 10. 5. And then we are patiently to suffer, knowing who striketh, and learn by his Judgment to be reformed from our sins, we may send up Prayers and Tears to him, *in whose Hand is the Heart of the King, and he turneth it whersoever he will.* God can either alter his thoughts, or suffer him to fall by an Accident, or Sickness, or which way it pleaseth his Almighty Wisdom. *Again they are minished and brought low through Oppression, Affliction, and Sorrow. He poureth contempt upon Princes*, Psal. 107. 39, 40. He can do it without our assistance, for he doth then more magnifie his own Power, neither are we to break his commands, for then we justly *suffer as Evil-doers.*

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The King is bound by Oath to keep Righteousness, and Minister true Judgment unto his People; for the observation or neglect of which he is to give account. Those seeds of evil within, make all the disturbance in the World; which are provided against by the Grace of him who is greater then *Solomon*, and then all people might dwell safely, every Man under his Vine, and under his Fig-tree from one end of the Earth to the other, all the days of our Kings and Governours. Christ, the Eternal Word hath laid down sure and lasting Foundations of Government, *To order it, and to establish it with Judgment, and with Justice, from henceforth even for ever; the Zeal of the Lord of Hosts will perform this.* Isa. 9. 6. 7. The Lord hath given such Laws, Rules and Directions to the World, that, if they were observed, would produce a perpetual Peace and Settlement throughout the whole Earth; But by Disobedience and turning aside comes in confusion, and every evil Work, as may be seen by what hath been aforesaid. 1 King. 4. 25.

And having now manifested the Truth, and shewed those Relational Duties between King and Subjects, I come to apply it to the People of *England*, viz. In the late Revolution of putting down one King, and setting up another, in this They are a *Nation that have not done Righteousness*, but they have *resisted and forsook the Ordinance of their God*; They have actually departed from that Established and fixed Order of Things he hath set up. So they are in danger to *dye in their Sins*, John 8. 24. *And shall utterly perish in their own Corruption*, 2 Pet. 2. 12. Their several Persons shall appear before the Judgment Seat of God, to give Account, and receive for what they have done concerning this Matter. *Seeing they despised the Oath, by breaking the Covenant, (when lo, they had given their Hand) and have done all these things, they shall not escape. Therefore thus saith the Lord God, As I live, surely mine Oath that they have despised, and my Covenant that they have broken, even it will I Recompence upon their own Head*, Ezek. 17. 18, 19. This place of Holy Writ is full and direct to the present purpose; for it is spoken as to the King of *Babylon*, who was an Heathen, and as much an Idolater and Estranged from God as a *Popish* Prince: But the Almighty doth take more notice, when through his own People his Name is prophaned or Rom. 13. 2.

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blaſphemed amongſt the Heathen. He calls it in a peculiar manner, *Mine Oath* and *my Covenant*: It is yet a greater aggravation to *hold the Truth in Unrighteouſneſs*: It is worſe to give occaſion for the Way of Truth to be evil ſpoken of. And therefore, when thoſe of the pure reformed Religion had ſworn a ſolemn Oath of Allegiance and Supremacy to a King, (whom they then knew to be a *Papiſt*) his lawful *Heirs and Succeſſors, in ſo ſtrict and particular a manner, as Words can well expreſs; When they had Crowned him, and performed Fealty; which probably was a like Ceremony which the Prophethere calls (*when lo, he had given his Hand*) To deſpiſe this Oath, and break this Covenant, makes *Proteſtaniſm* ſtink, and be evil ſpoken of throughout the World, and offends every one who is zealous for his God, and hath a right ſence of his infinite Holineſs and Uprightneſs.

*Which is *contradiſtinguiſhed* to *Uſurpers* and Intruders.

In this Alteration, They did *take Counſel*, but *not of the Lord*, Iſa. 30. 1. They had reſpect unto what they thought preſent Conveniency, but did not conſult his Word, nor ſeek unto him for Direction by Prayer and Humiliation: But it was done by their own Councils and manner of Vote. And afterwards they would *cover with a Covering, but not of my Spirit, that they may add Sin to Sin.* The *Scribes* and *Phariſees* of our Time have found out ſeveral Gloſſes, Diſtinctions, Reſtrictions, and Sentiments of their own deviſing, by which they would ſlubber over Perjury, and ſanctifie Injuſtice. And there was never any corruption of this Nature ſince the World began, but there have been alſo found out Prieſts to juſtifie it, and Judges and Lawyers to make it legal. But it is manifeſt, for *Deut.* 32. 4. *Hab.* 1. 13. *Iſa.* 5. 16. & 61. 8. *Job* 13. 7. *Pſal.* 33. 4. & 111, 7, 8. & 145. 17. *Rom.* 3. 8. afore cited, and ſundry other places of his Revealed Word, That This Revolution is none of God's Work or Doing in which he is well pleaſed: Only what he ſuffers, as he doth all the Sin and Wickedneſs in the World, and ſo he did the Manners of the *Iſraelites* Forty Years in the Wilderneſs.

Hoſ. 3. 4.

Then they did abrogate the former Oaths of Allegiance and Supremacy, and impoſe a new one. Shall ſuch eſcape by Iniquity? *And have done all theſe Things, they ſhall not eſcape. The Lord looketh from Heaven, he beholdeth all the Sons of Men; from the place of his Habitation he looketh upon all the Inhabitants*

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of the Earth; *He considereth all their Works*. He knoweth all those particular proceedings from the very beginning to this time; every Thing they have done Day by Day, all the several Occurrences, all the Lying Stories and False Accusations, the close and hidden Acts of Hypocrisie, all the tricks of *Machiavelian* Policy, and the several kinds of Sin and Wickedness. *These things have you done, and I kept silence; but I will Reprove, and set them in order before you.* As they were committed from Time to Time, so will he bring every secret thing into Judgment.

Therefore thus saith the Lord God, as I live, surely mine Oath that they have despised, and my Covenant that they have broken, even it will I Recompence upon their own Head. Here the Threatning is confirmed as much as possible, *As I live*, which is as sure as he is God, which again is as certain as there is a World, and any thing in it, (for some one must have made all these things, (and he is God) so certainly will he Recompence it upon your own Head. If we mistake not in the History of the Bible, This afterwards happened to be true, for when *Zedekiah* contrary to his Oath rebelled (compare *Ezek.* 17. with *Jer.* 52.) *Nebuchadnezzar* King of *Babylon* came with his Army against *Jerusalem*, and took it, and killed the Sons of *Zedekiah*, and put his own Eyes out, and slew the Princes of *Judah*, and led the people into Captivity. And how know we, but the same God may stir up and enable an Army of cruel *French* and *Irish* to invade our own Nation? Or suffer the Inhabitants of this Land to fall into discord and confusion, that *One is dashed against another*, as in our late civil Wars and Commotions. He will punish this National Sin of Perjury either in this World, or the World to come. God is highly provoked and dishonoured by every false Oath: The several Persons, who take it, pray that God would help them according to the Truth they speak and intend to perform; but prevaricating that their Prayers shall turn into their bosome, and so are in danger to be destitute of his aid, without which they shall perish. Jer. 13. 13, 14.

As you have already despised his Oath, so you may here despise his Word and Truth; But beware lest that also come upon you, *Behold ye Despisers, and Wonder, and Perish*: Take

heed leſt you provoke him yet more, and ſo fall into a greater degree of his Wrath and ſore Diſpleaſure. It is an eaſie matter to ſlight it all off, and put away his Statutes from you; but you cannot poſſibly avoid your own Particular Deaths, whereby you fall into the Hands of the Living God, and then he will account with all thoſe who behave themſelves ſtubbornly and contemptuouſly againſt him. You may now drive away theſe as Melancholly Fancies out of your Mind; Eat, Drink, and be Merry, have recourſe to Company, and ſo forget or harden your ſelves againſt what is here offered unto you. *When the two Prophets ſhall be ſlain, They that dwell upon the Earth ſhall make merry, and ſhall ſend Gifts to one another; becauſe theſe two Prophets tormented them that dwelt on the Earth*, Rev. 11. 10. But it would be ſome advantage and help for them, if they could eat or drink any thing which would make themſelves Immortal, that they ſhould not dye, and ſo prevent their own coming to Judgment: But now as the caſe ſtandeth, they had better hearken, and alſo comply with thoſe who would have hindred their own approaching Ruin and Deſtruction; who do only exhort and teſtifie, that Mankind do repent and forſake thoſe Sins which cauſe preſent Vexation, and render them liable unto future Miſery.

We have ſinned with our Fathers, We have committed Iniquity, We have done Wickedly. This Nation hath ſlain the Lords Anoin ed, for which is kept an Anniverſary Day of Humiliation & Repentance. His Son was 12 Years kept out of his Kingdom, and afterwards reſtored, for which alſo is an Anniverſary day of Thanksgiving, with forms of Prayer and Devotion anſwerable to it. His Brother, who hath the ſame Right, ſtands now excluded. Be not deceived, God is not mocked: Though he doth now hold his Tongue, and ſeems to be gone afar off; yet even now he ſpeaks unto us out of his Word, and is not far from every one of us: However, we muſt meet with and appear before him, when the Judge ſhall teſtifie himſelf, and give a clear account how we have Treſpaſſed againſt our God, by Tranſgreſſing his Laws, changing the Ordinance, and breaking the everlaſting Covenant.

Yet now there is hope in Iſrael *concerning this thing*, Ezra 10. 2

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We learn hence and from other places of Scripture, That there is no other way to Escape, but to Repent, and undo what we have done; for that is the Nature of true Repentance, that if it were to do again we would not do it; and also to undo a Fault as much as we can. Accordingly your selves being a new called and assembled again in *Parliament*, and there being appointed every month a Day of Fasting and Humiliation throughout this Kingdom, wherein according to the Lesson appointed for Even-
ing Service, we are to *shew people their Transgression, and the House of* Jacob *their Sins*: We are to *loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the Oppressed go free, and that ye break every Yoke*: So that you may take Counsel from God, and seek out of his Word and Commandment, Whether you ought not in Duty send Commissioners, and restore your late King *James* to the Seat and Throne of his Ancestors. Things may be yet peaceably adjusted and established upon the sure Foundation of Righteousness. A general and comprehensive Act of Oblivion and Indemnity may Pass and (as in the Restauration of *David* after the Conspiracy and Rebellion of his Son) it might be so ordered that Not one Man be put to death. All former Transactions may be forgiven and passed by, and Things for the future may be firmly established and secured for *Christian Liberty* against the undue Incroachments of Popery and Arbitrary Government.

Isa. 58.

Jer. 30. 9.

Our Nature is somewhat aukward and averse to Repent: What to undo and recant, to accuse out selves of fault, folly and shame, to be a Reproach and Contemptible to wise men, and to the Nations round about, seems hard in our natural proud state. Yet it is not unreasonable to confess what we cannot deny, our imperfection and want of fore-sight. It is an act of Prudence to return from our Errour, and of such an one who is able to discern what is really good and profitable. It is an advancement to a better state: Was it not more unreasonable to do those things at first, then it is now to leave them when they are discovered to be false and unrighteous? But chiefly which should have been mentioned in the first place, seeing we have offended against a great and good God; we are required, *Only acknowledge thine Iniquity that thou hast transgressed against the Lord thy God*, Jer. 3. 13. by despising his Oath, breaking his Covenant, and forsaking his Ordinance. Either you must do this now, which through the Goodness and Mercy of God may avail to his forgiveness and reward, or you will wish hereafter in vain, you had done it to turn from your selves guilt and condemnation. It is better to be liable

unto

unto Ignominy at present, and to lose somewhat of your esteem, here to rise up to shame and everlasting Contempt, to be a falling before the general Assembly of Angels and men at the Judgment of the great Day. *Little Children, let no man deceive you: He that doth Righteousness, is righteous, even as he is Righteous; in this the Children of God are manifest, and the Children of the Devil: Whosoever doth not Righteousness, is not of God, neither he that loveth not his Brother.* 1 John 3. 7. 10. That no man go beyond and defraud his Brother in any matter, for the Lord is the Avenger of all such, 1. *Thes.* 4. 6.

And now having laid these things before you; To send me unto Prison, or to proceed still against me as an evil-doer, This is to *add Iniquity to your Iniquity, and not to come into the Way of Righteousness*: It is to *kick against the Pricks*, which the more fiercely you do, the more you will wound your selves. I am a poor decrepit Creature, & partake of the same Flesh and Blood, but if you will prosecute that Manifestation of the Word and Truth of God, which appears forth through me, this is to *fight against him*, and to inflict Punishment on the God-head himself, if he were liable to suffering, but however, because that is in your Power, and we have sence and weakness to receive, you are ready to do the same unto his Servant. It is esteemed by some a piece of Bravery that they can do things against the Truth, and (as their Fathers did before them) persecute and kill the Prophets, who were appointed to make it known. But let such consider, or they shall feel that all those who of set purpose go against those Pillars of Truth (whereby God hath determined to judge the World) will find that they had better run their Head against a Stone-Wall, which may dash out their own Brains, but that remains unshaken. And when the same God (*who carrieth* the Generations of mankind *away as with a Flood, they are a Sleep*) shall call them to account for their usage to those *Prophets, and Wise men and Scribes whom he sent* They shall know that they had better let them alone. And let those of the present Age (albeit they have humane Authority on their side) take heed to themselves what they intend to do as touching any one; who doth only bear forth Testimony against a National Sin and Corruption, to keep up the Government of him, who is God of Gods, and Lord of Lords, the great King of all the Earth; and also to assert (notwithstanding all Transgression) the Immutable and eternal Rules of Judgment and Righteousness.

Acts. 5. 39 & 23. 9.

Psal. 90. 5.

Richard Stafford.

FINIS.